# **DRAFT**

Citizens Clean Elections Commission 2006 Education Plan Recommendation

November 14, 2005



### 2005 Year In Review

In May 2005, Off Madison Ave began its second year working with the Citizens Clean Elections Commission to create and implement an educational program on behalf of the Commission. The goal of the integrated campaign was to increase public awareness and educate Arizona citizens about the Citizens Clean Elections Act (the Act) and candidates running for office in November 2006.

The campaign consisted of both a general mass media campaign in television, newspapers and direct mail and a statewide public relations program. A comprehensive communications plan was developed which laid out the details of the the plan that has been implemented. In addition, a research program to assess results was developed. A crisis communications plan was also developed in order to have a clear action plan in place to manage unanticiapted issues or events.

The goal of both efforts was to provide the general public as well as key influencers in the media with clear information as to the goals of the Citizens Clean Elections Act and its benefits for both citizens and candidates.

The final comprehensive plan was presented to and approved by the Commission in early 2005. Creative that was developed for use in the mass media portion of the education campaign (television, print and direct mail) was produced and distributed to the Commissioners in July 2005.

#### **Overview**

The purpose of this document is to provide Off Madison Ave's proposal on how we will manage the Citizens Clean Elections Commission Education program in 2006. Based on key learnings and results garnered in 2005, Off Madison Ave is in a position to provide continued support and take the Education program to the next level with target audiences. The primary objective has been defined as building public awareness and understanding of the Citizens Clean Elections Act. Bolstering awareness and understanding is critical to ensure accuracy and proper context is communicated via the media. The plan and execution recommendations will follow a similar approach as the 2005 educational program; however, the primary vehicle for promotion of the CCEC will include an integrated approach utilizing research & strategy, public relations, paid media, online media and surveys.

### **Key Learnings & Conclusions**

As we plan for the 2006 Education Campaign, it is important to reflect on our experience and observations from this year and incorporate these key learnings into our future efforts. Key learnings from the 2005 Education Campaign include:

Behavioral Research Center Results

In January 2005, the Citizens Clean Elections Commission conducted a survey to measure the awareness of the Clean Elections Act. The research poll was administered and analyzed by Behavior Research Center (BRC), an independent market research firm located in Phoenix, Ariz. The findings concluded a 34 percent increase among registered Arizona voters is familiar with the Act. More than 400 Arizona voters statewide participated in the phone interviews, and the participants represent a cross section of the state's voter base in terms of gender, age, political party, ethnicity and location in the state.

In July 2003, BRC conducted a similar poll and found that 44 percent of Arizonans stated they were somewhat or very familiar with Clean Elections. Compared with January 2005, today 78 percent of registered Arizona voters state they are somewhat or very familiar with Clean Elections. BRC was



contracted by the Commission to design and implement both research polls to ensure its efficacy so the previous study findings could be appropriately compared.

The survey was conducted to help measure the effectiveness of the Commission's Education Plan. These research findings demonstrate that familiarity with the Act has grown significantly which was one of the objectives of the Plan.

Awareness about Clean Elections is strong across all voter demographics. However, there are still opportunities to build additional awareness among the following voting groups: women, those between 18 and 35 years of age and Hispanics. The Commission's education efforts will continue to focus on these important voter groups.

Nearly two-thirds of Arizona voters have an accurate understanding of what types of functions are performed by the Commission, and voters want to know more. Seventy-five percent of voters stated that they are interested in learning more about Clean Elections, up nearly 30 percent from the 2003 poll.

2005 Tax Return – Numbers to be inserted by Friday, November 18.

#### Overall Education Plan

Mass media appears to have been effective in stimulating awareness and increasing interest. Through a media mix of television, newspaper, and direct mail messages were delivered to citizens statewide, providing education about getting involved in the political process with a \$5 qualifying contribution. A call-to-action in each advertisement encouraged the public to visit the Web site or call for more information. Each time messages were delivered to the public through paid media, the Clean Elections office received an increase of calls from citizens seeking additional information and the Clean Election's Web site experienced high spikes in traffic. This confirms that people are interested in the Act and are eager to learn more. Awareness of the Clean Elections Act has increased and as media is placed in 2006, future studies conducted by an independent research firm, e.g. Behavioral Research Center (BRC) can aid in determining methods of communication to effectively deliver information the public is seeking.

Kev Message Delivery

Off Madison Ave commenced an aggressive public relations campaign on behalf of the Citizens Clean Elections Commission during 2005.

Activity was directed in three major areas:

- 1. Support of the overall Education Plan and communicating developed core messages about the Citizens Clean Elections Act through proactive media outreach as well as management of inquiries from the media
- 2. Promotion of CCEC speaking engagements
- 3. Development and management of messages surrounding specific issues as they arose such as enforcement issues and Commission staffing news.

During the January 2005 – November 2005 period:

- XX general press releases were written, distributed and pitched to target media
- XX editorials were written and placed in target news outlets



- 25 speaking engagements were pitched, secured and implemented on behalf of the Commission
- 17 deskside briefings were pitched, secured and implemented on behalf of the Commission

For Clean Elections, due to the nature of the assignment and the areas addressed, analysis of coverage does not follow the standard column inch/equivalent ad value approach. At Off Madison Ave, in general, we believe that an ad value approach to public relations coverage is potentially dangerously misleading. It assumes that all coverage is good, which as we know is not the case. The core message is what is most important.

- Is it accurate?
- How does it position the Citizens Clean Elections Commission and the Act?
- Is it balanced and objective? This is especially key in a subject area that is so highly charged politically.

The analysis seeks to determine the quality of the coverage relative to those questions. It also seeks to identify any patterns of coverage and opportunities with specific outlets.

Below are samples where the Commission's key messages were properly communicated to target audiences via media vehicles:

"A lot of the enforcement stuff this time around involves Clean Elections candidates. This is a voluntary system. If someone wants to use public funds, they have to follow the rules.

"This is very important. I think the commission is fairly new. It's important for the commission to be firm, solid, fair and thorough. If they can do that, they can build public confidence." (Gene Lemon, The Arizona Republic, February 13, 2005)

"The Clean Elections system is designed to take power away from special interest groups and big campaign contributors." (Chair Marcia Busching, Arrowhead Independent, February 28, 2005)

"It's (Clean Elections) helped improve the integrity of state government and it's encouraged citizen participation in the political process getting people who wouldn't otherwise have the influence or money to be to run for office." (Chair Marcia Busching, Arrowhead Independent, February 28, 2005)

### **Key Findings**

Substantial coverage has been given to the overall subject of Clean Elections in the media during 2005. This was especially true in the second and third quarters when Commission staffing changes were making the headlines, the Rep. Smith enforcement case proceeded through the courts and several other enforcement matters were discussed in media outlets, e.g. Rosati, Murphy, Gould, Shafer, etc. The high profile nature of these topics brought Clean Elections to the forefront.

<u>Primary topics are enforcement matters.</u> Enforcement coverage had been generally balanced and objective, although it is critical for the Commission to continue to have one voice and to maintain a healthy, working relationship with the media.

In 2005, it was critical to position Commission staff as the authorities and sources for stories on Clean Elections. The stance of the coverage varies depending on whether it is editorial or straight news reporting.



Straight reporting is generally neutral or positive in articles. In editorials on the other hand coverage is largely negative and criticizes the Commission's decisions pertaining to enforcement matters.

There are several reporters who have tended to write consistently balanced or positive stories and thus need to be targets of continued development:

- Paul Davenport Associated Press
- Le Templar *East Valley Tribune*
- Robbie Sherwood, The Arizona Republic
- Chip Scutari, The Arizona Republic

On the negative side there are reporters who have taken strongly negative approaches in one of more articles. Bridge building and continual dissemination of accurate information and questioning of inaccuracies are essential for these reporters.

- Bob Robb, *The Arizona Republic* important to communicate accurate information regarding enforcement actions and to follow up on inaccuracies.
- Jill Goodman *Arrowhead Independent* Misinformation and confusion. Clear opportunity for education and clarification of difference between the CCEC and Murphy / Rosati enforcement matters

#### Recommended Actions

<u>For 2006</u>, the proposed desk side briefings are critical. In order to take a proactive approach and ensure that accurate information is available to reporters across the state, desk side briefings should occur as soon as possible with all major media outlets. Furthermore, these one-on-one meetings with target media will serve as an introductory opportunity for newly appointed Voter Education Manager Michael Becker to establish a personal relationship with CCEC beat reporters.

Ensuring that reporters have been provided with accurate information in *advance* about the Act and Clean Elections, this will aid in garnering balanced coverage. By proactively scheduling desk side briefings as soon as possible, the chance of inaccurate information making its way into covered is lessened. It will also position the Citizens Clean Elections Commission and its newly appointed staff as the objective authority to be consulted on the Act.

Continued reiteration of clear messages regarding enforcement and the emphasis on fairness and due process is key. Enforcement coverage is a potential lightening rod for biased coverage. Many enforcement actions are still in progress so there is continued potential for negative coverage with respect to campaign finance reporting. It is therefore essential that prior to Commission meetings where enforcement actions are on the agenda that potential questions and challenges from the press are anticipated and appropriate messages considered.

Looking ahead to the 2006 election, development of messages on reporting requirements and consequences is an opportunity to frame the CCEC coverage. Many negative articles during the 2004 election focused on enforcement actions and matching funds. An aggressive outreach program starting in Winter 2005 on finance requirements can help blunt later claims of "too hard," "confusing" and the other fall back excuses tendered by many candidates and their attorneys.



<u>Crafting and gaining support for changes to the Act is a priority of the Commission.</u> Positive media
relations have been established with some of the political press and efforts continue with other media
outlets.

#### Public Relations

<u>Proactive Media Relations was a cost-effective means to identify and communicate the CCEC key messages to the target audiences via multiple media mediums.</u> This greatly assisted in educating Arizona citizens about the Act and communicating the Commission's stance on enforcement matters.

• Positive media relations where the CCEC "side of the story" is effectively communicated, via op-eds, will continue to have positive returns for the Commission.

#### Crisis Communications

### Messages, Talking Points and Q&A

Off Madison Ave created talking points related to key aspects of the Clean Elections education program to assist all spokespersons in speaking with the same voice and with the most updated, accurate information. Whether the issue addressed enforcement matters, CCEC staffing changes or general interest topics, Off Madison Ave helped prepare spokesperson for challenging and unexpected questions.

### Issue Identification, News Monitoring and Daily Reports

Off Madison Ave utilized its professional research tools to aid in the monitoring of news and continually researching issues relevant to the CCEC. The client received daily emails with new information to make sure all key team members have access to the most current information and news available. This allowed us to react quickly to misinformation in the press and track opinion and coverage trends that could impact our overall strategy.

#### Crisis Communications Plan

A crisis communication plan was also developed which established protocols for dealing with issues as they might arise that would require clear and consistent communications activity on behalf of the CCEC. Topics included, but are not limited to, lawsuits, campaign finance reports, regulatory issues and candidates' misuse of funds.

#### Media Relations Outreach

Media outreach is critical to a successful public relations campaign. We all know that reporters typically don't run news releases just because they come across their fax machine or email. It is the time spent on the phone with reporters and the relationships developed that ensure coverage.

A strong media relations campaign continued throughout 2005. Off Madison Ave developed media lists to target the appropriate audiences, and has spent the majority of our time proactively pitching and handling media inquiries with editors, producers and reporters. The agency conducted proactive media pitching to secure coverage and interviews, facilitated reporter needs and handled all incoming media requests/inquiries, providing materials and information.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The following include objectives established in 2005 as well as additional priorities for 2006.

### Objective #1:



Continue to build public awareness, understanding and participation of the Citizens Clean Elections Act Building understanding is critical in order to increasing public awareness.

Target Audience:

### **Registered Voters**

An increase in activism among Arizona voters is a potentially significant education opportunity. The active voter segment of registered voters will be the primary focal point. Secondary efforts will be made to continue to outreach to new voters across the state through grassroots activity to help stimulate participation in the political process and understanding of and commitment to the Clean Elections process. This is especially key for outreach among minority communities where voter registration drives continue to increase and greater political activism is expected as immigration reform takes center stage in Arizona.

### Voter Messages

These voter messages are designed to be ones that are communicated in public outreach efforts such as presentations to community groups and any other forums where the Citizens Clean Elections Commission comes into contact with the voting public.

- The Citizens Clean Elections Act puts more control over the political process in the hands of voters
- The Citizens Clean Elections Act limits the influence of large contributors during elections and enables elected officials to better represent all citizens.
- Voters have more choices and control over who represents them because qualified people who traditionally couldn't afford to run for office now can.
- Voters don't have to contribute a lot of money to have influence in the political process. With only a \$5 contribution, their voice can be heard.
- Most importantly, Arizonans should make their voice heard by voting. The Citizens Clean Elections Commission helps voters make informed decisions by sponsoring candidate debates and publishing candidate information both in print and online.

### Recommended Programs

The following programs are recommended for 2006.

## Current Knowledge Assessment

The most recent study done by the Behavior Research Center in 2005 demonstrated that awareness was up 34% from the survey conducted by the BRC in 2003. Between public relations and paid media endeavors, statewide awareness of the Act will continue to increase in 2006. It is recommended that an additional survey be conducted in January 2006 to measure not only current levels of awareness, but also the capacity of public understanding of the Act and how citizens view their opportunities to participate. The qualitative and quantitative data would be used to help identify further opportunities for voter messaging refinement and outreach activities to better serve the Commission in its education efforts. Off Madison Ave will provide council on the questionnaires and guidance on survey information; however, the agency recommends the assessment be conducted by the Behavior Research Center (BRC) to remain consistent with previous surveys.



### Public Relations

The goal is to continue to educate the Arizona citizens and stakeholders about the Clean Elections Act and the benefits of this campaign finance reform. This will be done through two primary channels:

- a. General Media. A schedule of Op-Ed pieces and strategic pitches are planned for each month. While there is no guarantee of publication, the goal is to disseminate information to the public about the facts of Arizona's Clean Elections Act with information targeted to address specific issues in 2006 when candidates will begin declaring themselves as participating candidates. A 12-month communications timeline with targeted pitches and story angles to coincide with statewide events and news pegs / editorial calendars will also complement the media relations strategy.
- b. <u>Community Events</u>. Off Madison Ave will identify and target community events around the state that attract the target audiences and establish a one-to-one relationship with local figureheads and community leaders. On-site, the CCEC will have an opportunity to engage and educate attendees about the mission of the Clean Elections Act and how he/she can become involved at the local level.
- c. <u>Deskside Briefings</u>. Off Madison Ave will coordinate and orchestrate a series of deskside briefings with target editors and reporters around the state to engage the media in hearing about the latest and upcoming CCEC initiatives. This two-way communication will assist in fostering a relationship that will assist in positioning the CCEC staff as reliable sources for media queries. Sample publications include: *The Arizona Republic, Tucson Daily Star, Sierra Vista Herald, Flagstaff Daily Sun, Mohave Valley Daily News* (Bullhead City), Kingman Daily Miner, etc.
- d. Speakers Bureau. A monthly statewide speakers bureau program is planned. The goal is for representatives from the CCEC staff to reach out and speak to groups across the state about the purpose and facts of the Act, and what this means for citizen participation. The goal is to speak to groups of 40 to 80 attendees, covering all parts of the state and all types of groups that represent active voter populations. A speaking topic matrix will be developed so that talks represent timely subjects, such as the \$5 donations, the meaning of being participating or nonparticipating candidates. Target groups will include, but not be restricted to:
  - Chambers of Commerce Phoenix, Tucson, Flagstaff, Yuma, Sierra Vista, etc.
  - Rotary and other local development groups
  - Minority Business Associations Los Abagados Hispanic Bar Association, etc.
  - Senior citizens associations
  - Church community action and charitable groups
  - Two and four-year college student groups *Arizona State University, Cochise College, Board of Community Colleges, etc.*

### Paid Media

In 2005 media played a significant role in the overall strategy. Media was targeted in one short time frame for intensive messaging leading into the initiation of the \$5 contribution period. Messaging focused on educating the public about how they could participate in the political process by making a \$5 contribution to the Clean Elections prospective candidate of their choice. Television, direct mail, and newspaper advertising were the delivery methods. In 2006, four short targeted flights of media using a mix of television, radio and online to create a synergistic effect is recommended from February to November. Overlapping messages through a variety of mediums will extend the reach of the message while creating a



high level of frequency during strategic time periods leading up to the Election. **Media flowchart attached outlining recommended dates.** 

#### Tactical Television

In 2005, television proved to be a highly efficient medium to reach the major population in Arizona.

In 2006, it is recommended that television be used in the Phoenix and Tucson markets. The Phoenix and Tucson DMAs cover the complete state of Arizona. The existing \$5 Contribution campaign will continue to air, reminding people about Clean Elections and how they can participate. It is recommended that short, targeted flights be leveraged for sufficient exposure. Light messaging will begin in February with rotating flights running through the primary elections, building momentum and finishing up strong in the period of time leading into the general elections. In addition to paid placements of the already produced :30 spot, it is recommended that the television creative be modified into a :15 spot. This will be positioned to television stations as a PSA spot. The spot will garner additional coverage as added value throughout the campaign.

#### Radio

Radio advertising is recommended in place of direct mail in 2006. Radio's greatest strength is frequency. By utilizing radio in conjunction with television will strengthen the reach and frequency of the message to the public, increasing the impact. The radio station audience can be selected through specific programming formats. In order to cover the state of Arizona, Off Madison Ave recommends purchasing radio in the outlining areas of Arizona to truly create a statewide coverage campaign. Messaging should remain consistent with the existing \$5 Contribution Campaign. Developing a :15 PSA spot in addition to a :60 spot, will allow for potential added value spots to air throughout the campaign. **Creative needs to be developed.** 

### Online Media

## **Online Display Banner Advertising:**

An online display ad campaign, also called banner advertising, is a cost-effective way to bring additional exposure to the campaign as well as efficient way to reach your target audience on a granular level. Additionally, the support online ads give to a traditional campaign and the tracking abilities of online media are unmatched.

Off Madison Ave recommends a concentrated 6-8 week online banner ad campaign from mid August 2006 igh Election Day. As the target audience will be anticipating the upcoming election, focusing the online media buy the 6-8 weeks leading up to Election Day will give additional support and awareness to Clean Elections and encourage voter participation in the election. A similar campaign was executed during the 2004 election year for CCEC and proved to increase awareness of the Act while generating more than 15,000 visits to the Web site.

Running ads for the Citizens Clean Election Act on national Web sites but targeting those ads solely to users within Arizona or the Phoenix/Tucson markets cuts through the online clutter. When reading an article on a national site, Web users can be immune to "normal" online advertising. However, when a local ad appears on the national site, it alleviates the dullness and encourages users to notice. Additionally, the use of national sites through geo-targeted ads allows for more extensive use of impactful ad formats, and enables more refined targeting. For example, many of the sites recommended offer larger sizes of online banner ads and innovative, impactful formats such as online video ads in which a television spot may be repurposed.

Behavioral targeting will also be a consideration for the 2006 online marketing plan for CCEC. By running ads on national ad networks, that is, second tier Web sites which aggregate their advertising inventory for allocation by the advertising network, users can be specifically targeted, not only geographically, but also



based on their past Internet usage. For example, through a behavioral network, it is possible to reach an internet user in Arizona who has visited a political Web site within the last 30 days. This is an advanced way of effectively reaching niche markets and an appropriate use of budget dollars.

National sites with a geo-targeted focus may include the AOL network of sites with specific placements in such areas as cnnmoney.com or business2.com. A behavioral network such as Tacoda or Revenue Science is recommended.

Local sites often offer a lower cost per impression for online banner advertising and a loyal, motivated audience. Recommended local Web sites focused in the news or community sections of the site may include azcentral.com, azfamily.com, azdailysun.com, Tucson.com and the yumasun.com. By leveraging the use of radio through traditional media, sites within the Clear Channel suite of sites will also be considered for placement of online banner advertisements.

To optimize and report results from the banner campaign, a robust tracking system is used in which each banner creative is tagged by placement and venue to determine which sites are best performing and which placements need to have funds reallocated. Through this tracking method we will be able to report back definitively the venues, placements, sizes and creative which are successful. By including national sites with a local geo targeted overlay along with niche local sites (especially in the Phoenix and Tucson areas) a mix of sites will be tested, tracked and refined.

## **Online Search Marketing:**

Why does search engine marketing work? Because you're fishing where the fish are swimming. If someone takes the time to use a search engine to look for your product or service, they are demonstrating a strong willingness to purchase. Consumers using search engines are more motivated to act than consumers viewing online ads or television commercials, listening to the radio, or reading newspapers or magazines. People using search engines are by definition looking for something. That something could be information on clean elections.

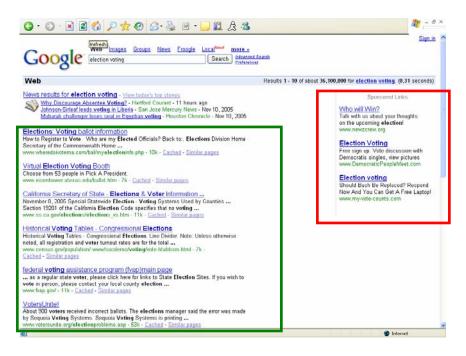
There are two types of search engine marketing:

- -Search Engine Optimization (SEO), also called Natural Search or Organic Search
- -Pay Per Click Advertising (PPC)

During the 2004 election year, CCEC participated in a very successful PPC campaign. The campaign generated more than 7,700 visits to the Web site. In 2006, it is recommended continuing advertising through paid search as well as initializing a full Search Engine Optimization program ensure search engine ranking for the CCEC Web site.

A recent review of search terms relevant to Clean Elections found a predicted volume of nearly 3,800 searches each month on the Internet. A PPC campaign and SEO program would commence in February and actively run through November 7. This will ensure the target audience geographic is reached and budget is maximized while giving clean elections visibility online throughout the exploratory period and qualifying period. Additionally, Off Madison Ave utilizes a step-by-step approach to executing a search marketing campaign. Each campaign is grounded in research, strategy and experience.

Sample of Search Engine Results. The red box outlines PPC results, while the green box outlines the natural SEO results.



### About PPC:

In approximately two years, Pay-per-click (PPC) has gone from a little-known offshoot of search engine marketing to the savior of Internet advertising. More than 300,000 advertisers are actively using PPC, making it the most widespread form of interactive marketing in existence. It's the most efficient form of advertising available, if someone doesn't click on your ad, you don't pay. A PPC campaign can be executed rather quickly and requires constant monitoring and attention as keyword prices change rapidly.

Through our results from the previous campaign and additional experience, a PPC campaign in 2006 would run from February through the first week in November. Keywords will be chosen based on past success and new research. Additionally, the Off Madison Ave team will strategically write text ads for use on Google and Yahoo Search as well develop a strategy for keyword bid management and optimization. The first week of every month, CCEC will receive a comprehensive report of the previous month's progress and recommendations for further optimization.

To maximize email newsletter sign up and success of the PPC campaign, OMA also recommends creating one or more custom landing pages for users to be directed to immediately after clicking on a clean elections ad. While the current site,

http://www.ccec.state.az.us/ccecweb/ccecays/home.asp offers an extensive amount of information it can be difficult for new visitors to navigate. Research shows that the average Web user from search stays on a page fewer than 20 seconds. Providing a clear path and concise information for visitors after they click will be imperative to success. Items which may be considered for the visitor-landing page include:

- An introduction and brief history of The Clean Elections Act in Arizona
- Invitation for visitors to sign up for the email newsletter to learn more
- Calendar of upcoming debates and speakers bureaus
- Links to list of candidate information and other resources



### About SEO:

The most important influencer of a site's visibility within search results is Search Engine Optimization (SEO). This involves making sure that a Web site has the best possible mixture of copy, links, programming, graphics, strategy and other ingredients to convince search engines that the site in question should appear near the top of the results list for a given search term.

By understanding the current natural search engine rankings of the Web site and keywords as well as a thorough understanding of potential competition for the same keywords, Off Madison will begin the SEO program with a benchmarking and competitive analysis so progress may be recorded from the start. After the initial research, 20 specific keywords will be selected and OMA will give CCEC a "recipe" of best practices for optimizing the current Web site. OMA will write 20 pages of custom copy, one page for each keyword, specifically for search engines.

Upon approval of the new page copy and execution of the pages by CCEC, Off Madison will hand submit all pages to be indexed within the top search engines. This process can be tedious and lengthy, but through our dedicated staff and specialized software we keep a very tight grasp on the process.

As with all online programs, CCEC will receive comprehensive reporting at the beginning of each month with the progress, recommendations and continued plan for a successful SEO program.

## **Opt-in Email Communication:**

The commission has an existing opt-in email list of nearly 300 names and email addresses. As this list consists mainly of Arizona residents who have asked for additional information regarding Clean Elections it is imperative for the commission to provide updated information to this audience on a consistent schedule.

It is recommended that in 2006, this list be utilized through a monthly email newsletter providing updated information including debate schedules, additional candidate information and other ways to increase participation. Off Madison's PR team will author the email newsletters on a monthly basis; however, the commission will be responsible for actually sending the email. CCEC currently has the software in place to send the emails out directly.

Through online display advertising, a PPC campaign, SEO program and traditional media, it is expected that the email list will grow through new subscriptions as awareness of the Act increases and the general election nears.

A detailed media flow chart is appended to this plan.

#### Objective #2:

Continue to educate prospective candidates about the resources Clean Elections Commission makes available including funding and guidance. Prospective candidates for the 2006 elections are now in the exploratory period and are able to file their statement of organizations at any time. It is therefore essential that outreach continue to prospective candidates and their supporting organizations as they begin considering their election plans.



### Target Audience:

### **Prospective 2006 Candidates**

Prospective candidates will come from across the state so messages need to ensure broad coverage including heavy emphasis on minorities to support efforts to engage more minorities in the political process.

### Prospective Candidate Messages

These messages would be incorporated into all presentations conducted in forums that reach out to prospective candidates and their supporting organizations. The goal is to reinforce among prospective candidates the value of being a Clean Elections candidate

- The Citizens Clean Elections Act provides funding to run their campaign, allowing them to spend more time with voters and on the issues – the true reasons candidates run.
- The Citizens Clean Elections Act opens up the political process for participation by all citizens minimizing the historical barrier of campaign financing.
- The Citizens Clean Elections Act has made it easier for candidates and elected officials to represent all citizens by significantly reducing the leverage that large contributions from special interests have held over candidates in the past.
- Arizona voters spoke. They want their elected officials to represent all citizens.

### Recommended Programs

### Public Relations

Public Relations will play a key role in reaching out to prospective candidates.

- General Media. The planned schedule of Op-Ed pieces and articles will strategically tie-in with "news of the day" topics, e.g. the source of funds for candidates, how candidates qualify as a CCEC candidate, the benefits of running as a participating candidate, etc. The account team will also seek out opportunistic story angles and pitches to complement the CCEC timeline, e.g. qualifying period. A preliminary schedule is appended to this plan.
- b. Speakers Bureau. The planned speakers bureau will seek to include forums where prospective candidates, such as local community active citizens, will be in attendance. A sample of venues and organizations include the following: Biz AZ Magazine, Arizona Board of Regents, the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, etc. A listing of target organizations is appended.

### Candidate Training

In surveys conducted among both Primary and General Election candidates it is clear that more direct training is desired to assist candidates with the financial reporting aspects of running for public office.

Investigation is already underway regarding the provision of hands-on training and reporting software on actual computer terminals. Strategies for taking such training "on the road" are also recommended, such as obtaining the cooperation of local community colleges and private colleges that are located across the state to open their computer labs for candidate training sessions. This solicitation of the participation of these organizations may also prove beneficial later on in the organization of debate sponsors in 2006.



#### Web site Audit

• As a full Web site redesign is not in the budget nor does time permit, Off Madison Ave recommends a one-time site audit of the current CCEC Web site in 2006. The Web site is often the first experience constituents may have with clean elections. The Web site is seen as the authority and information resource not only for the voting public but also for participating candidates. If the Web site is viewed as confusing, hard to navigate or information can not be attained easily, it may reflect negatively on the entire Clean Elections process. With the 2006 election year, it is expected that the Web site will receive an increase in traffic from interested parties and it must reflect the best combination of navigation, information and resources available.

By carefully reviewing the Web site statistics, through analysis of the raw data logs from the past 3 months, insight may be gained as to the use patterns of visitors on the site and recommendations made for increased usability, search engine friendliness and content management. This analysis will result in a comprehensive report with top recommendations for implementation by the CCEC Web team. This audit may also be used in future years as the baseline site assessment as additional changes are made on the site and enhancements executed.

#### Candidate Email Reminder Service

To specifically address candidate's use of the Web site and enhance their experience and overall ease of use of the Clean Elections system, Off Madison Ave recommends implementing an email program to automatically email participating candidates as deadlines approach. Off Madison Ave employs a robust email system, Exact Target, which has the ability to program and automatically send emails based on a predetermined schedule. As the deadlines for candidates are known in advance, all emails would be developed and programmed into the system ahead of time and the appropriate email would be sent on schedule. For example, June 9, five days before the deadline to file nominating petitions and papers with the Secretary of State, candidates would receive an email reminder including any important details and perhaps a note about the next steps in the process.

Off Madison Ave will work with the CCEC team to define the deadlines and exact messages to be sent for each email. Off Madison Ave will program and send all emails based on the schedule as well as provide a report approximately 5 days after the email was sent as to how many went out, how many were opened and when the next schedule email is to deploy to candidates.

### Objective #3:

Focus specifically on active citizen groups, minority groups and minority opinion leaders. Active citizen groups have the ability to "stretch" the outreach efforts for Clean Elections. While it is recognized that their credibility will be confined to the individuals and causes with which they are aligned, they have the ability to serve as primary vehicles for true grassroots efforts.

Focusing on minorities and minority opinion leaders is designed to get these rapidly growing segments of Arizona's population engaged in the political process from both voter and candidate perspectives.

Target Audience:



### **Active Citizen Groups**

Active citizen groups have the ability to spread the message for Clean Elections. Their efforts also will serve to "stretch" the outreach efforts for Clean Elections among registered voters and candidates. While it is recognized that their credibility will be confined to the individuals and causes with which they are aligned, they have the ability to serve as primary vehicles for true grassroots efforts. As was noted in the 2005 plan, it is critical that they be armed with *accurate* information to counter critics and opponents of Clean Elections. Accurate information about funding sources will also have to be a key component of this communication. The sources of funding and enforcement for Clean Elections must be clarified. Finally, in recognition that several enforcement actions were required during the 2005 it is essential that it be made abundantly clear across all targets that the funding is monitored and how funds are used is carefully audited.

Included in the Active Citizen Group target audience are 2006 debate sponsors. Two rounds of surveys were conducted at 2004 Candidate debates, providing valuable insights to both the Commission and the sponsors. Because of the amount of work that goes into sponsoring a debate, it is important that outreach to prospective 2006 sponsors begin in 2005 so that candidates and citizens can be provided with the best possible debate forum.

### **Minorities & Minority Opinion Leaders**

In the 2004 election minorities from all backgrounds turned out in record numbers. Increasing activism in the minority community provides an opportunity for grassroots activities to be conducted that encourage greater minority candidacies. The availability of Clean Elections funding for these candidates is a core message.

Active Citizen Group Messages

- The Citizens Clean Election program helps more people become involved in the political process and allow more people access to their elected officials.
- Citizen groups may find it easier to support their own candidate because smaller contributions, not large political donations, drive the process.
- The Citizens Clean Elections Act provides public funding to run their campaign, allowing them to spend more time with voters and on the issues the true reasons candidates run.
- Sponsoring Candidate debates is one way in which groups can become more deeply involved in the political process.

#### Minority Messages

- The Citizens Clean Election program helps more people become involved in the political process and allow more people access to their elected officials.
- In a state that is growing fast and more diverse by the day, the Clean Elections program allows more minorities the opportunity to run for office.



- Voters don't have to contribute a lot of money to have influence in the political process. With only a \$5 contribution, their voice can be heard.
- The Citizens Clean Elections Act limits the influence of large contributors during elections and enables elected officials to better represent all citizens.

Recommended Programs

Public Relations

Public Relations will be a key mode of reaching out to these active citizen and minority groups.

a. <u>General Media.</u> The planned schedule of op-ed pieces and articles are planned to ensure media coverage reaches out to all segments of the minority population in the State. Direct articles and op-ed placements will be sought out in the same publications that were used in the 2005 Education Campaign, including *La Prensa, La Voz, Arizona Informant, Asian American Times, Navajo Times, Arizona Native Scene.* 

In addition, coverage for Arizona's Clean Elections Act on a national basis will be pursued in prominent national media outlets serving minority communities, such as *Indian Country Today*.

Speakers Bureau. The planned speakers bureau would seek to include forums where prospective candidates such as local community active citizens will be in attendance. Included in the schedule would be outreach to the widest possible range of groups. The goal of these opportunities would also be to reach out to the interested organizations and groups as potential debate sponsors in 2006.

## Grassroots Marketing

The Clean Elections Commission is in the process of developing a bi-lingual information piece that will be in the form of a rack card. This educational card can be used as an outreach tool through grassroots methods. Off Madison Ave can develop a targeted list of high traffic locations where this card could be distributed. Due to staffing limitations at the Commission, Off Madison Ave would secure all locations and coordinate the delivery of cards. The Commission would be responsible for storage costs of the rack card and delivery fees. Examples of locations where this card could be distributed: Cultural centers, schools/universities, student centers, voter booths, corporations, college political groups, DMV, and any other high traffic areas.

#### Online Media

Adding a page to the existing Web site is recommended. The focus is on prospective sponsors. It will provide basic information and requirements early in the year. Later on once debate sponsors are confirmed the section of the Web site may become a repository of announcements, on-going training materials, downloadable survey forms and more.

As part of this, a quarterly report highlighting CCEC activity around the state will be made available to share with prospective sponsors.

Tools Devel ent





## Debate Sponsor Manual

A wide variety of materials are provided to debate sponsors to aid them in their staging and promotion of the debates. Beginning in 2006 it is recommended that a formal manual in the form of a 3-ring binder be developed and provided to sponsors as soon as they have been acquired. The goal is to consolidate into one easy to use manual everything that a sponsor needs to do and know to stage a successful debate.

### Objective #4:

Continue to build awareness and understanding of Clean Elections as a non-partisan steward of campaign assistance among the media, key influencers and Legislators. If the goal of Legislative reform is to be achieved outreach to all who can impact the formulation and support of legislation is key. Using the Education Campaign to disseminate accurate and timely information will be a core objective as the Legislative agenda is set early on in 2005.

Target Audience:

### Legislators, the Media and Key Influencers

Ongoing communication with those decision-makers on legislative reforms and the media and other parties who can influence those decisions is critical if appropriate changes are to be supported to make the Act even more effective. Using the power of public relations to reach out to the media and key influencers and thus indirectly to Legislators will be a core strategy.

Legislator, Media & Key Influencer Messages

- The Clean Elections Act is the will of the people. Arizona's voters approved the Act with a goal of helping their elected officials be more issue oriented and focused on the will of their constituent, and less burdened by fund-raising and the influence of special interests.
- In a state that is growing fast and more diverse by the day, the Clean Elections program allows more minorities the opportunity to run for office.
- Arizona is seen as a model of campaign finance reform in both the U.S. and abroad. Arizona's elected
  officials should be proud of the stature of the state in this area and seek to keep the State #1 in reforming
  how elections are financed.

Recommended Programs

Public Relations

Public Relations will be the core medium for reaching out to these key message "gatekeepers." A variety of initiatives begun in 2005 will continue throughout 2006. These include:

#### Arizona Targets

The activities focusing on Arizona will continue to expand on initiatives begun in 2004.

• Establishing and maintaining relationships with target statewide media outlets on a monthly basis with CCEC initiatives, achievements and potential story angles to keep the Act top-of-mind among voters, candidates and other stakeholders. A monthly schedule of potential storylines has been developed and continually updated based on predictable events as well as leaving room for articles that respond to current events. A 12-month communications timeline with targeted pitches and story angles to coincide



with statewide events and news pegs / editorial calendars forms the foundation of public relations activity.

- Disseminate accurate and timely information on a monthly basis ranging from news releases, bylined articles and op-eds in target statewide media outlets.
- Offer CCEC officers as subject matter experts for speaking opportunities and media interviews.
- Continue to establish and strengthen relationships with key media on the local, regional and statewide level to become a reliable resource for media queries. The current media contact list has grown to over 300 contracts and this will be continually expanded and updated.
- Conduct a statewide meet-and-greet tour with target news outlets. CCEC officers will meet with editor/producers in strategic markets around the state to explain the Act, success stories, legislative changes and its role as a national model for campaign finance reform.

### **National Targets**

With Arizona as a model of campaign finance reform there is a broader opportunity to now pitch the success of the Act in more broad-based media. While achieving coverage in national media is a far more difficult and time consuming task, there is an opportunity to draw more national attention to the fact that Arizona's Act is seen as successful and positive. As with state media a national schedule of storyline pitches would be developed along with target editorial contacts will be developed. Coverage in more national media can also have a halo effect on all of the other target audiences such as active voters, active citizens and minorities, debate sponsors and prospective candidate. Target publications will include *USA Today*, the Wall Street Journal, among others.

Issue Monitoring, News Monitoring and Daily Reports

Throughout 2006 Off Madison Ave will utilize its professional research tools to aid in the monitoring of news and continually research issues relevant to the Citizens Clean Elections Commission. The daily emails with new press coverage will continue to be prepared and forwarded.

#### Tools Development

Press Kit Revisions

The existing press kit materials will be reviewed and updated in light of planned 2006 activities, so that the most appropriate information is available for the various outreach efforts.

### **Evaluation & Research**

In addition to the research recommended for January 2006, it is also advised that a post-election evaluation be conducted in December of 2006. This study should also be facilitated through the Behavior Research Center. 2005 was a pivotal year for crisis management as it related to enforcement issues for the Commission. An evaluation of public perception regarding way the Commission handled enforcement issues and the manner in which they were addressed will help craft key messages moving into 2007. This study will also provide a sense of changes in voter awareness of Clean Elections since the evaluation done in the earlier part of the year. This will aid in the measurement of success of the marketing efforts conducted throughout 2006 and be used for the strategic planning for 2007.

Public Relations

Off Madison Ave measures public relations value based on a combination of significant factors:



<u>Key Message Delivery</u>. All public relations at Off Madison Ave begin with the development of specific messaging objectives and the formulation of the key messages that form the foundation of all subsequent communications. In addition to ensuring that these messages are integrated into all written communications, all in person communications also focus on ensuring key message delivery. All potential spokespeople are media trained with key message delivery and message management in mind.

Any and all placements are evaluated first and foremost against the message goals and key messages.

- Were the key points communicated?
- Were they interpreted and positioned as desired?
- What was the overall context in which they appeared? Did it support the messaging objectives and content or detract from it?

This first assessment combines both factual and qualitative assessment. The actual content can be factually compared to the goals. The context represents a more subjective yet still crucial form of assessment.

<u>Target Audience Reach.</u> Reaching the right target is essential. Obtaining a placement is irrelevant if it does not reach the correct target audience. At Off Madison Ave, where each placement appears is evaluated according to the quality and quantity of the desired target audience. This is a purely quantitative assessment whether the medium is television, magazines, newspapers or one on one interview with journalists. Are the right eyes and ears seeing and hearing the message?

<u>Environment.</u> What was the environment in which the messaging appeared? Is the medium local, regional or national? Was the messaging a core focus or was it simply buried as a minor point in a broader story? This again is a factual assessment.

<u>Subsequent Activity</u>. While public relations is designed to influence and manage information and opinions, tracking what occurs as a result of a placement is always critical. Did other media pick up the story? And if so, how did that subsequent placement score according to the measurement dimensions mentioned earlier? Did it generate inquiries? If a placement was designed to elicit a specific consumer response such as attending an event, what happened? Again these are factual outcomes that can be tracked if the proper mechanisms are in place ahead of time.

#### Account Administration

#### Weekly Status Meetings

Off Madison Ave's team will continue to meet weekly, at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, at the Citizens Clean Elections Commission office to discuss program status, generate new ideas, move projects forward and agree on next steps.

### Monthly Updates

Per the current contract, monthly summary reports will continue to be prepared and delivered by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for the preceding month. These will continue to cover actual activity versus plan and anticipated activities and points of focus for the upcoming month.

### Citizens Clean Elections Commission Events and Meetings

As in 2005, at least one agency staff member will attend all Citizens Clean Elections Commission meetings to ensure the communications team benefits from first-hand exposure to the information shared.

# Budget

The following budget represents the optimum 2006 plan. It is detailed to the degree possible at this time in order that adjustments can be more easily made.

A month-by-month expenditure spreadsheet is appended.

<u>Paid Media</u>	Size / Description	<u>Est. (</u>	<u>Cost</u>	
TV & Radio	Three 2-week flights, one 4-5 week flight	\$609,	,620	
Online	Pay-per-click and Banner Advertising	\$100,	,000	
Contingency Fund	Funding placed aside for unknown opportunities	s \$100,	,000	
Total Media		\$809,	,620	
Media Hard Costs	<u>Description</u>	Est. C	<u>Cost</u>	
Radio Spot	Production of :60, :15 spot; 1-time fee	\$ 8,0	000	
TV Spot	Revision of :30 to a :15; 1-time fee	\$ 5,0	000	
Banner Ads	Development and coding; 1-time fee	\$ 3,0	000	
Search Engine Optimization	20 custom copy pages, recipe and hand submiss	sion \$ 5,0	000	
Email Auto Reminder	Pre programmed email for candidate date remin	der \$ 2,5	500	
Web site Audit	Comprehensive review of site with recommendation	ations \$ 2,5	500	
Grassroots Mktg.	Postage/Delivery of materials	\$ 18,0	000	
Total media hard costs			000	
Travel Costs Contingency for statewide travel for Speakers Bureau, Debates and other public relations opportunities. (Billed at cost, state guidelines, approved in advance) \$10,000			000	
$\mathcal{E}$		Included in re		
Monthly Fees (January – December 2006)		\$310,	\$310,380	
Total Budget		\$1,20	00,000	